MCCC NEWS

Mid-Cities Commodore Club, Inc.

December 86 Vol. 4 Issue 12

A Personal Experience

by Barbara Cramer

On October 31st I boarded a plane for Houston not really knowing what to expect or even who would be meeting me. My luggage was filled with disks of our latest public domain acquisitions which I had collected from both the Amiga and Club libraries. The airport security personnel contributed to my apprehension by x-raying the majority of these disks just after I had strongly requested that they hand check my carry-on luggage.

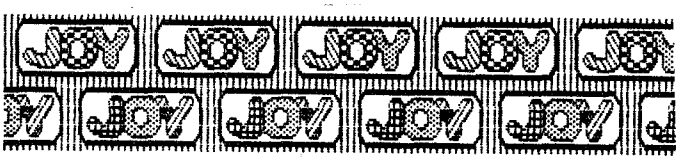
Needing to study my notes for the presentation that I would soon be giving to the Commodore Houston Users Group, I settled into my seat and got to work. Who should be placed in the next seat next but a full fledged and experienced computer programmer. How could I possibly resist the temptation to discover new information and pass the time with conversation of my favorite hobby?

As I was met at the Houston Airport by Mary Howe and David Myers, CHUG presidents both past and present, I began to feel the energy and excitment of being the sole, live representative of the MCCC. I was flattered when David called to ask that I present a program to their members on my work with C64 graphics, but, I didn't realize how much fun it would be until I felt the warmth of friendship from their members. Not only was I treated to good accomodations, I was made to feel like one of the family. This surprised me. After all, I wasn't someone special; I was just like many other members of the club, interested in computers and willing to volunteer some time for my own benefit as well as others. It was this fact soon became the central issue of my presentation.

I have long felt that anyone with motivation and desire could do any of the things I have done with no special training. Whether it is drawing a graphic, font or border, arranging a song or creating a program, the major factors are desire and willingness to try. I have had little training in art appreciation and absolutely none in drawing. My only distinction was that when I was presented with a large dental bill, I decided to turn it into an opportunity.

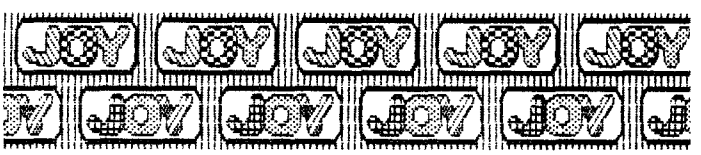
Standing in front of an audience that literally absorbed every word I said was a bit scary as well as flattering. The atmosphere was so positive that I can't help feeling that this sincere enthusiasm is the major factor in the continuing success of their club. The responsibility of contributing to the club is shared by all not just laid upon the officers. I must admit that this spirit was extremely refreshing when I recalled the current problems our club faces with the coming elections. Thinking of our difficulties in finding just one volunteer for each office seemed a bit unrealistic at the CHUG meeting where plans were being announced for an upcoming computer festival with at least a dozen activities to benefit the general public as well as members.

The appeal of this article is perhaps limited to myself, the personal friends I made and the members in attendance at the meeting. The purposes of my writing are twofold. First, I would like the CHUG members to know how much it meant to me. I thank them for giving me an experience that I wish all of our members could have shared. Second, I wanted to convey my impressions of a firsthand experience with a strong, vital and exciting Commodore club that seems to be working due to the excitment, enthusiasm, support and cooperation of it's members. If I could have bottled it, I would have brought it home!



Holiday Cheer

The officers of the Mid-Cities Commodore Club wish you a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year.



Pay For What You Get

An Editorial by Rick Schulz

A contemporary writer-philosopher once observed, "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch." In other words, everything, including the so-called "free sample", has a price, and somebody is footing the bill. The writer then concluded that "you should pay for what you get, and get what you pay for."

All of us expect quality software when we shell out big bucks, and few of us will gladly pay out for junk. The same is true of hardware - why else would we have invested well over $1,000 in an Amiga unless we believed it was worth every penny?

So it is with the MCCC. I would be willing to bet that every member, at one time or another if not consistently, takes advantage of the free software made available each month. That, of course, is one of the functions of the club, consistent with its charter to promote and educate the public, which includes club members, about computers, and in particular, Commodore machines.

The club also provides a platform for dealers to present their products, giving members an opportunity to examine, and as in the case of November's Sound-Off (Amiga Chapter), compare competing brands. We offer all this plus the time to socialize with others who have common interests in exchange for a few dollars a year. Such a bargain, right?

Wrong! If the only requirement was to send in a check for membership dues, there would be no club, no speakers, no demos, no free software and no newsletter. None of the activities are provided as a direct result of the membership dues. All of these activities, plus the planning and follow-up activities result from the time and effort donated by not only the club and chapter officers, but by members willing to donate their time and talent to make the club a success for us all. It is not necessary for each member to seek office to "pay for what you get," but it is only fair that each member, at some time make some contribution. An article or review, a program or just bringing your Amiga to a meeting is a generous contribution. A little bit of help now and then goes a long way for a lot of people.

It is interesting to note that the Amiga chapter now has 81 members. At the last meeting there were over 63 people present, three of whom drove over 50 miles just to attend the evening meeting.

Products used to produce this issue of the MCCC News include:

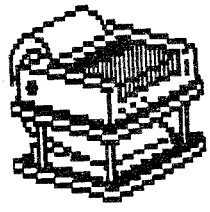
AMIGA™

Font master II

Word Pro 64

PAGE PAGE

DIGI-VIEW™



GEOS

Star Gemini 10X and SG 10

Axiom Elite 5

Broderbund Software

THE PRINT SHOP™

Holiday Graphics Edition

KI

Pictures Plus and Perfect Pairs

Programmer's Corner by Bob Lawson

One reason for the success of programs listed in Compute, Ahoy, and Run magazines is the checksum programs they publish to aid individuals who type in the listings. I thought it might be nice to have our own. It's quite lengthy but it does several things in addition to verifying checksums. Hopefully, you will perservere and the effort of typing it in will be rewarding. In future articles, I will use this program to provide you with the checksums so you can easily correct typing mistakes for an error free program. Before running the program, be sure to save it to disk. A typing error can be disasterous.

Ed. Note: Working copies of this program will be available from the club librarians very soon. The program is called MCCC PROOF.-BJC

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61930 POKE53281,0:POKE53280,0:
      GOSUB61931:GOTO6 1952
61931 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(17)CHR$(158)
      TAB(3)CHR$(18)CHR$(32)CHR$(32);
61932 PRINTCHR$(146)CHR$(169)CHR$
      (127)CHR$(18);:FORG=1
      TO10:PRINTCHR$(32);:NEXT
61933 PRINTCHR$(146)CHR$(169)CHR$
      (127)CHR$(18)CHR$(32)CHR$(32)
61934 PRINTTAB(3)CHR$(18)CHR$(32)
      CHR$(146)CHR$(169)SPC(2)
      CHR$(127)CHR$(18);
61935 FORG=1TO8:PRINTCHR$(32);:NEXT:
      PRINTCHR$(146)CHR$(169)
      SPC(2)CHR$(127);
61936 PRINTCHR$(18)CHR$(32)
61937 PRINTTAB(3)CHR$(18)CHR$(32)CHR$
      (146)SPC(16)CHR$(18)CHR$(32)
61938 PRINTTAB(3)CHR$(18)CHR$(32)CHR$
      (146)SPC(4)"M.C.C.C."
      SPC(4)CHR$(18);
61939 PRINTCHR$(32):PRINTTAB(3)
      CHR$(18)CHR$(32)CHR$
      (146);:FORG=1TO16
61940 PRINTCHR$(175);:NEXT:PRINTCHR$
      (18)CHR$(32)CHR$(13)CHR$(5)
61941 PRINTTAB(5);:GOSUB61947:
      PRINTTAB(6)CHR$(127)CHR$(18)
      CHR$(32)CHR$(32);
61942 PRINT"N E W S L E T T E R"CHR$
      (32)CHR$(127):PRINTTAB
      (7);:GOSUB61947
61943 PRINTTAB(8);:GOSUB61949:PRINT
      TAB(9);:GOSUB61949:PRINTTAB
      (10);:GOSUB61949
61944 PRINTTAB(11);:GOSUB61949:
      PRINTTAB(12);:GOSUB61949
61945 PRINTTAB(13)CHR$(127)CHR$(18);:
      FORG=1TO22:PRINTCHR$(32);:NEXT
61946 PRINTCHR$(127):RETURN
61947 PRINTCHR$(127)CHR$(18);:FOR
      G=1TO22:PRINTCHR$(32);:
      NEXT:PRINTCHR$(127)
61948 RETURN
61949 PRINTCHR$(127)CHR$(18)CHR$
      (32);:GOSUB61951:PRINTCHR$(32);
61950 GOSUB61951:PRINTCHR$(32)CHR$
      (32)CHR$(127):RETURN
61951 FORG=1TO9:PRINTCHR$(39);:
      NEXT:RETURN
61952 PRINTCHR$(19);:FORG=1TO7:
      PRINTCHR$(17);:NEXT:PRINTTAB
      (5)CHR$(18);
61953 PRINTCHR$(5)CHR$(109)CHR$(17);
61954 PRINTCHR$(157);:FORG=1TO9:
      PRINTCHR$(146)CHR$(127)CHR$
      (18)CHR$(109);
61955 PRINTCHR$(157)CHR$(17);:NEXT
61956 PRINTCHR$(145)CHR$(111);:
      FORG=1TO22:PRINTCHR$(183);:NEXT
61957 PRINTCHR$(19);:FORG=1TO17:PRINT
      CHR$(13);:NEXT:PRINTCHR$(150)
61958 PRINTTAB(20)"P"SPC(9)"R":
      GOSUB61972
61959 PRINTTAB(21)"R"SPC(7)"E":
      GOSUB61972
61960 PRINTTAB(22)"O"SPC(5)"D":
      GOSUB61972
61961 PRINTTAB(23)"O"SPC(3)"A":
      GOSUB61972
61962 PRINTTAB(24)"F"SPC(1)"E":
      GOSUB61972
61963 PRINTTAB(25)"R":GOSUB61973
61964 GOTO61974
61965 PRINTTAB(25)CHR$(145)"R":
      GOSUB61972
61966 PRINTTAB(24)CHR$(145)CHR$(145)
      "F"SPC(1)"E":GOSUB61972
61967 PRINTTAB(23)CHR$(145)CHR$(145)
      "O"SPC(3)"A":GOSUB61972
61968 PRINTTAB(22)CHR$(145)CHR$(145)
      "O"spc(5)"D":GOSUB61972
61969 PRINTTAB(21)CHR$(145)CHR$(145)
      "R"SPC(7)"E":GOSUB61972
61970 PRINTTAB(20)CHR$(145)CHR$(145)
      "P"SPC(9)"R":GOSUB61972
61971 GOTO61977
61972 FORT=1TO100:NEXT:RETURN
61973 FORT=1TO700:NEXT:RETURN
61974 POKE646,0
61975 GETA$:IFA$<>""THEN61978
61976 GOTO61965
```

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61977 POKE646,14:GOTO61957
61978 POKE646,7
61979 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(17)CHR$(17)
      TAB(5)"INITIALIZING .....
      PLEASE WAIT"
61980 FORJ=32000TO32467:READX:
      POKEJ,X:NEXT
61981 FORJ=49243TO49408:READX:
      POKEJ,X:NEXT:GOTO62066
61990 DEFFNC(X)=PEEK(X)+1+16*
      ((PEEK(X)AND15)=15)
61991 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(13)TAB(1)
      "F-1)BRDR F-3)BKGD F-5)
      CRSR F-7)MENU"
61992 GETZ$:IFZ$GOTO61992
61993 GETZ$:IFZ$=""GOTO61993
61994 Z=ASC(Z$):IFZ=135THEN
      POKE646,FNC(646):PRINTCHR$
      (19);:GOTO61991
61995 Z=ASC(Z$):IFZ=133ORZ=134THENX
      =53147+Z:POKEX,FNC(X)
61996 IFZ=95GOTO61991
61997 IFZ<>136GOTO61992
61998 GOTO62066
61999 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(13)
      TAB(3)"TYPE LISTING - RUN
      62000 TO VERIFY":END
62000 PRINTCHR$(147);:F=1:T=PEEK
      (62)*256+PEEK(61)+1:D4=
      "CHECKSUMS":E$="PRINTER"
62001 PRINTCHR$(13)"OUTPUT"CHR$(32)
      D$CHR$(32)"TO:"CHR$(13)
      TAB(51)E$"/MONITOR"
62002 GETG$:IFG$="P"THENJ$="TOTAL":
      PRINTCHR$(145)TAB(11)CHR$(18)
      E$:GOTO62005
62003 IFG$="M"THENJ$="TOTAL":
      GOSUB62008:GOTO62010
62004 GOTO62002
62005 CLOSE4,4:OPEN4,4:CMD4:PRINT
      CHR$(1)CHR$(129):GOSUB62008
62006 IFLN>ETHENPRINTCHR$(13)JR;
      CHR$(61)CH;:CLOSE4,4:PRINT:
      CLR:PRINT:GOTO62012
62007 GOSUB62016:GOSUB62022:
      GOSUB62009:GOTO62006
62008 PRINTCHR$(147)D$CHR$(32)CHR$
      (58):LK=PEEK(44)*256+PEEK
      (43):E=61929
62009 T=LK:LK=PEEK(T+1)*256+
      PEEK(T):LN=PEEK(T+3)*256+PEEK
      (T+2):RETURN
62010 IFLN>ETHENPRINTJ$;CHR$(61)
      CH;:CLR:GOTO62012
62011 GOSUB62016:GOSUB62017:
      GOSUB62009:GOTO62010
```

```
62012 PRINTCHR$(32)CHR$(32)"DO CK
      SUMS MATCH (Y/N)?"CHR$(19)
62013 GETA$:IFA$="Y"THENCLR:GOTO62068
62014 IFA$="N"THENCLR:GOTO62030
62015 GOTO62013
62016 S$=STR$(LN):L=LEN(S$)-1:S$=
      MID$(S$,2,1):RETURN
62017 IFF=1THEN62020
62018 IFF=2THENGOTO62021
62019 IFF=4THEN62022
62020 PRINTSPC(20-L)CHR$(145)S$;:
      F=F+1:GOTO62023
62021 PRINTSPC(34-1)CHR$(145)CHR$(32)
      CHR$(157)S$;:F=F+2:Goto62023
62022 PRINTSPC(6-L)S$;:F=1
62023 CS=0:N=0:C=0:FORP=T+4TO
      LK-2:PK=PEEK(P)
62024 IFPK=143THENP=LK-2:GOTO62029
62025 IFPK=34THENC=(C=0)
62026 IFC=0ANDPK=32THEN62029
62027 IFPK=137THENN=N+1:CS=CS+
      (203ORN):PK=164
62028 N=N+1:CS=CS+(PKORN)
62029 NECTP:CH=CH+CS:PRINT"="RIGHT$
      (STR$(CS),LEN(STR$(CS))-1):
      RETURN
62030 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(13)
      TAB(2)"LIST & RE-EDIT - RUN
      62000 TO VERIFY":END
62031 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(13)
      "AFTER MERGE ROUTINE, RUN
      62000 TO VERIFY"
62032 DATA169,0,133,183,169,147,32,
      210,255,162,0,32,79,126,32,
      228,255,201,89
62033 DATA240,7,201,78,208,245,76,
      134,227,162,73,32,79,126,32,
      207,255,201,20
62034 DATA240,18,201,13,240,14,166,
      183,224,16,240,231,157,60,3,
      232,134,183,208
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62035 DATA231,166,183,240,219,169,
      44,157,60,3,232,169,80,157,
      60,3,232,134,183
62036 DATA169,13,32,210,255,169,13,
      133,184,133,185,169,8,133,186,
      169,3,133,188
62037 DATA169,60,133,187,32,192,255,
      162,13,32,198,255,32,57,126,
      32,57,126,32
62038 DATA228,255,208,24,32,228,255,
      208,22,162,94,32,79,126,169,
      13,32,195,255
62039 DATA32,204,255,32,89,166,76,
      134,227,32,57,126,32,57,126,
      133,20,32,57,126
62040 DATA133,21,160,0,32,57,126,
      153,0,2,240,3,200,208,245,200,
      152,24,105,4,133
62041 DATA11,32,19,166,144,68,160,
      1,177,95,133,35,165,45,133,
      34,165,96,133,37
62042 DATA165,95,136,241,95,24,101,
      45,133,45,133,36,165,46,105,
      255,133,46,229
62043 DATA96,170,56,165,95,229,45,
      168,176,3,232,198,37,24,101,
      34,144,3,198,35
62044 DATA24,177,34,145,36,200,208,
      249,230,35,230,37,202,208,242,
      32,99,166,32
62045 DATA51,165,24,165,45,133,90,
      101,11,133,88,164,46,132,91,
      144,1,200,132,89
62046 DATA32,184,163,165,20,164,21,
      141,254,1,140,255,1,165,49,
      164,50,133,45,132
62047 DATA46,164,11,136,185,252,1,
      145,95,136,16,248,32,99,166,
      32,51,165,76,113
62048 DATA125,32,228,255,166,144,
      240,13,32,204,255,162,105,32,
      79,126,104,104,76
62049 DATA128,125,170,96,189,91,
      126,240,6,32,210,255,232,
      208,245,96,32,32,32,32
62050 DATA32,32,32,32,32,32,32,32,
      32,32,32,32,32,32,32,32,32,
      32,32,32,32,32,32
62051 DATA32,32,32,32,32,32,32,32,
      32,32,32,13,32,32,32,32,32,
      83,79,85,82,67,69
62052 DATA32,68,73,83,75,32,73,78,
      83,84,65,76,76,69,68,63,32,
      40,89,47,78,41,0
62053 DATA147,13,69,78,84,69,82,
      32,80,82,71,32,78,65,77,69,32,
      0,32,13,13,13,13
62054 DATA147,13,68,79,78,69,13,
      13,0,5,5,5,5,32,32,32,32,32,
      32,32,32,32,32,32,0
62055 DATA32,191,192,165,95,166,
      96,133,251,134,252,32,19,
      166,165,95,166,96,144
62056 DATA10,160,1,177,95,240,4,

      170,136,177,95,133,122,134,
      123,165,251,56,229
62057 DATA122,170,165,252,229,123,
      168,176,30,138,24,101,45,133,
      45,152,101,46
62058 DATA133,46,160,0,177,122,145,
      251,200,208,249,230,123,230,
      252,165,46,197
62059 DATA252,176,239,32,51,165,165,
      34,166,35,24,105,2,133,45,144,
      1,232,134,46
62060 DATA32,89,166,76,116,164,32,
      253,174,32,121,0,144,22,240,
      14,201,171,208
62061 DATA10,169,1,133,95,169,8,133,
      96,208,21,76,8,175,234,234,
      234,32,107,169
62062 DATA32,19,166,32,121,0,240,12,
      201,171,208,235,32,115,0,32,
      107,169,208
62063 DATA227,165,20,5,21,208,6,169,
      255,133,20,133,21,96,-1
62064 POKE56,125:POKE55,0:CLR
62065 PRINTCHR$(13)TAB(11)"INSERT
      SOURCE DISK":FORT=1TO5000:
      NEXTT:SYS32000
62066 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(13)
      CHR$(32)"1)COLORS 2)TYPE
      3)MERGE 4)VERIFY"
62067 GETA$:A=VAL(A$):ONAGOTO
      61990,61999,62000:GOTO62067
62068 PRINTCHR$(147)CHR$(13)CHR$(13)
      CHR$(13)"SYS49243,61930-62069";
62069 PRINTCHR$(145)CHR$(145)CHR$
      (145):POKE 631,13:POKE198,1:END
```
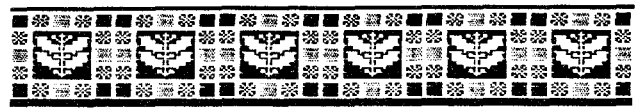

Before trying to RUN the program, make sure you save a copy. If you've made any serious typing errors, you can re-load the saved copy, edit and correct the errors and re-save. Next month, checksums will accompany the article, a complete description of how to use it and we'll do some practical exercises. Included will be some modifications to the version above which will include a couple of utility routines. When the program is complete, you will have a powerful programming utility. Until next month, happy programming.



Graphic Conversion A Comparison

by Bruce Larson
MCUA, Minneapolis, MN

Before I begin a listing of various graphics conversion programs for the C-64 I wish to make it clear that space in this publication, as well as the limitations of my pea-sized cerebral RO, may leave a lot to be desired. I also wish to make it clear that I can only report on what I know about and have tried. There may be a lot of other good stuff out there!

COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

Icon Factory -- Probably the best all-around conversion program I've seen! It will convert Animation Station, Billboard Maker, Blazing Paddles, ComputerEyes, Doodle, Flexidraw, Koala, SuperSketch, and Printshop Screenmagic files to each other, as well as convert Printshop, Pringmaster and Newsroom graphics to each other, or to the aforementioned art program files. It will enlarge Printshop, etc. graphics to four times their size, removing the "jaggies" with a neat "optimizer" feature. With Icon Factory you can even move the color from a multi-color file to a hi-res type file. Easy to use, and well documented, Icon Factory also allows you to crop, remove color, or invert the file before converting it. You can also precisely overlay multiple images of graphics. If you can buy only one ... this is it!

Billboard Maker -- Although this excellent program was designed to make enlarged printouts of art files ... big enough to cover the state of Minnesota from an original Doodle file ... it also will make a number of file conversions. It will handle conversions involving Doodle, ComputerEyes, Flexidraw, Printshop, Logo, PDRAW, Koala, Animation Station, Blazing Paddles, and SuperSketch. If you use the "strip color" function, it will convert hi-res files to multicolor; however, it will not strip color from multicolor files, and therefore, will not do a real good job going the other way.

Universal Graphics Converter -- Although it claims to "convert anything to anything" you have to have more gray matter than me to do it, as it is very poorly documented. I haven't tried them all, but it supposedly converts Koala, Paint Magic, Blazing Paddles, Sorcerer's Apprentice, Screenmagic, Cad Gem, Movie Maker, Micron Eye, Flexidraw, Doodle, CBM and non-CBM Printshop, Micro Illustrator, Comal and Logo files. Using its "Universal File" feature I was also abot to convert Cadpak 64. It also will invert the image, but only allows left-right cropping.

Get & Save A Pic -- This "sleeper" is a must for your converter library! A hardware-software combination, it will "grab" hi-res graphics off of the screen and save the bitmap to Doodle, Koala, or Super Sketch. With it I've even been able to "convert" compressed files or files that just have instructions for drawing the picture, not the picture itself. Of course to do that, you must own the program in order to put the picture on the screen in the first place. Among some of the uses you could give this program are the converting of GEOS and Newsroom screens to Doodle or Koala! I've also been able to "grab" a screen in the middle of a load. Don't be misled by the packaging of this program ... which is terrible ... this is truly a gem!

ComputerEyes (Newsroom Compatible) -- Although designed primarily to bring digitized ComputerEyes art into Newsroom, its low cost (approximately $15.00) makes it ideal for transporting art into Newsroom photos. It will take an 8K hi-res file (32 blocks Printshop Screenmagic, PDRAW, Foexidraw, etc.) and let you convert it to a Newsroom photo. With it, and some of the other converters in a Club Library, you could bring almost anything into Newsroom ... including Doodle and Koala files! Unfortunately, it does not convert Newsroom clipart or photos to anything else.

Newsroom Graphics Expander -- As near as I can tell, all it will do is convert Printshop graphics to Newsroom, or the 300 Newsroom graphics ON THE DISK to Printshop. Not much, in my book, for the money! I don't believe it will convert the other 2000 Newsroom graphics to Printshop.

Printshop Companion -- A super program for drawing or manipulating Printshop graphics. It wil also convert portions of a Doodle picture to a Printshop graphic, and although it claims the ability to grab other hi-res screens for conversion, I haven't had much success with that feature.

The Graphics Integrator -- Among other things, this program will convert Flexidraw or Printshop Screenmagic files to Doodle or vice versa. It will also convert Cadpak 64 files to Doodle. A unique feature of the program is the ability to convert a Doodle or Flexidraw file into a sequential file that can be read by the Paperclip word processor ... which can then be printed along with the text.

Graphic Conversion -- This interesting package supposedly converts Koala, Flying Colors, UltraBasic-64, HES Graphics Basic, Doodle, Cadpak 64, and any 32 block hi-res file like Screenmagic, PDRAW, ComputerEyes, and Flexidraw. It will convert multi-color files to a black and white file where each color now has a special pattern. One of the programs on the disk will also convert a B/Graph file to Doodle. A third program does a most interesting job of converting a full Doodle picture to a three block Printshop graphic! It takes a while, about 12 minutes, and naturally, you will lose most of the detail ... but it works!

GEOS DeskPack I -- Apparently the GEOS people are now taking orders for this package which supposedly converts Printshop, Printmaster and Newsroom graphics to the GEOS format. Unfortunately, it doesn't go the other way around! All I've seen is their hype in RUN magazine ... I haven't tried it.

Chemeleon -- I believe this one is put out by Lodestar. It will supposedly convert Cadpak 64, Doodle, 32 block hi-res files (like Screenmagic, Flexidraw, PDRAW, and ComputerEyes), HES Graphics Basic, Logo, Simon's Basic, Super Expander, The Tool, Video Basic, Blazing Paddles, Koala, Micro Illustrator, Peripheral Vision, and the standard C64 screen. I obviously haven't tried all of these conversions, but the ones I've tried have worked. Unfortunately, the authors did not allow for Koala's reverse spade ... to load you must type ?PIC (filename), and when you save a Koala file you must name it with an extra letter in front of the PIC and then use an editor to change the hex for that letter to an 81.

Xetec Interface

by Bill Eckle, PACC, Prescott, AZ

This is not intended to be a comprehensive review but rather some personal comments on the Xetec (pronounced zee-tek) SuperGraphix Interface with a Star SG-10 printer. My system also includes a 128 with a 1571 drive.

I mainly use my printer for word processing (Easy Script), and utilitiy purposes such as the PrintShop and SkyTravel dumps, so the review is limited to these purposes only.

My previous equipment, which I tend to compare this with, was a Gemini 10X and a CardCo +G. There is no comparison! I really wanted to replace my 10X for the "new letter quality" mode on the SG-10; however, the Xetec Supergraphix has many custom fonts available from which to choose, including one which is equally as "near letter quality" as the SG10. I'm told that the interface will work with a 10X and have the same features and abilities as with the SG.

The interface includes a disk with over 20 downloadable fonts to choose from, or you can design your own. You may download two fonts at a time into the interface from the disk. [Ed. note: My understanding is that this is two !!more!! fonts, that one is resident.] You select between the two by the DIP switches on the interface. Before loading a program like EasyScript, you load the disk with the fonts and download them into the interface. You then load your program and set the switches accordingly. The manual says you can even power off for up to 15 minutes with full font retention.

The switches are very well marked and easy to get to (you had to unscrew the cover of the +G every time to make a change). [Ed. note: I never had to get into my +G after the first time. I could make all necessary changes with the 10x switches or by locking in the interface before loading in the program.] There is a 1525 emulation setup which has had no problems with anything I've tried yet. I get a SkyTravel print-out in 2 minutes and 40 seconds which is much quicker than the 1525! It also has an ASCII conversion setup and a transparent mode as well, which are easily chosen from the switches. The switches are active, which means you do not have to power off/on to make them accept changes. There is also a reset switch on the interface, which saves a lot of reloading if things don't go right. It, like the +G, draws power from the cassette port, which means one more wire to hang down in back. [Ed. note: and break off.] But I'm told that the printer has the necessary 5 volts if you are electronically inclined and you want or need another power source.

I also like the manual that comes with it; it was obviously written using the fonts from the interface, but it is very readable and has decent instructions. It may be an unfair comparison as the +G has been around awhile and has been updated too with the G-Whiz, but the manual is very helpful in comparison (could I also have learned a few things in 2 years?). There are accomodations for various printers and several of the popular word processors are addressed too.

There are several graphics demos on the disk, which are quite impressive and let you know that the Xetec will be able to handle about anything that will be along soon. Also included is a Lo and Hi Res program for screen dumps.

I almost forgot! It also has an 8K buffer. That's where your fonts go when downloaded. But if you don't use the fonts, it is nice to have the monitor/computer free to continue working while the printer whittles away at the 8K of space.

As you can probably tell, I'm very satisfied with my purchase and highly recommend this combination for most applications. The current list price for the interface is $99, but it is generally advertised anywhere from between $65-$75. For all the extra features, it is well worth the extra $15-$20 more than you would pay for most others.

Have You Seen . . .

...the stunning jacket that Bill Raecke's wife, Evelyn, designed? Bill has been sporting the prototype design which features a raised Amiga logo of multicolored yarn above a striking representation of the Amiga red and white checkered ball. The garment also includes monogramming on the front to give it a personal touch. This is **not** embroidery; all work is machine finished and would easily rival the Neiman Marcus label.

Each jacket takes over 25 hours of work to complete and the quality of workmanship (workwomanship?) makes it worth every penny of the $150.00 price tag. Why Not? Enterprises will be marketing the jackets from right here in Arlington on a limited edition basis. Don't miss seeing this one-of-a-kind product as you renew your membership dues at the MCCC Holiday Party!

WHY NOT? Computer Enterprises

P.O. Box 171806
Arlington, Texas 76017

Ho! Ho! Ho! -
Five Family Christmas Games
Review by Barbara Cramer

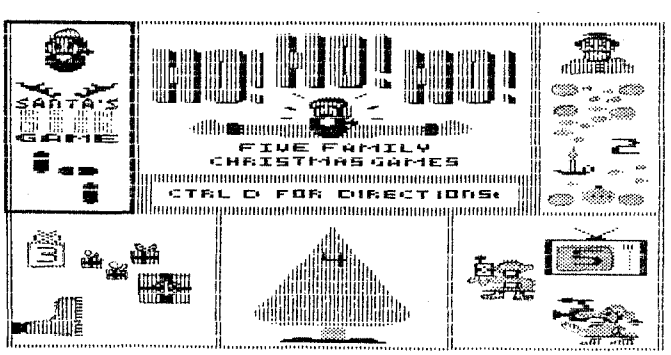
It is my opinion that Random House has never produced an educational program that was less than excellent. Their series of programs based on the Peanuts cartoon characters not only make learning fun, but hold **my** attention almost as long as my 5 year old son. Ho! Ho! Ho! is no exception to this rule.

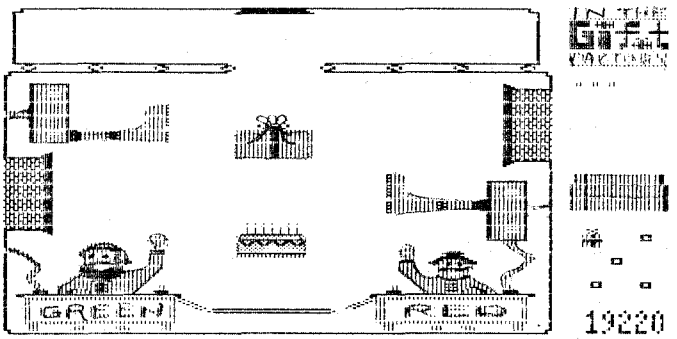
While this program is not really an educational game, you will find that your children will learn a few skills as they enjoy playing these well illustrated games. The games, themselves, are a little different than the commonplace arcade styles games we have all seen since the beginning of computer history. Take, for example, Santa's Big Show where you become the Television Station Manager filming Santa's historic ride on Christmas Eve. From the control panel, you watch all four cameras filming the event and chose which one to place on the air. The object of the game is to watch for a close-up of Santa and hit the corresponding number on the keyboard to select that camera's view.

Other games are a little more traditional. In Santa's Reindeer Game you are asked to build a barrier of footsteps around Rudolph avoiding trees and sliding on ice patches. In Cynda's Cookie Game you beautifully decorate and stack cookies while avoiding the hands which will steal cookies, grab you and literally shake you for a few seconds. In the Gift Factory you are asked to sort red and green presents by operating a boot which will kick them into a chute. Timing is essential in this one for you must also avoid kicking things like birthday cakes which are bouncing up and down along with the packages. Strategy and finesse are used to Light the Christmas Tree where you can set traps to catch the falling stars which in turn light portions of the tree.

There are two skill settings for each game and directions for play are an included option in each of the five games. All of the games are timed which may provide a bit of frustration for younger users. My five year old son was able to operate the program easily after being shown how to get around and what to do in each game. Reading is perhaps included for the adults, not necessarily the children.

The most attractive feature in all of the Random House programs that I have seen for children is their use of humor. Funny things happen sometimes when the adversary crosses your path. I think it is this element of suprise and fun that holds the attention of children as well as their parents. Ho! Ho! Ho! is one set of games that you will **not** have to tolerate playing for the sake of your children. I think you will actually enjoy it. At Babbage's $8.45 selling price, it's a steal.





Fixing Error 23
by Tom Lynch, SFVCUG, CA

There will come a time when loading your favorite program that the disk will stop prematurally and protest that an error #23 has ocurred. This is a checksum error. The DOS of the disk uses a checksum to provide first order error detection. It does this by adding all the 256 bytes together and throwing away multiples of 256 until the number is between 0 and 255. If the read of a sector does not calculate to the same number then an error has ocurred! You do not know which byte got corrupted or if the checksum was bad. This is the easiest error to work around. The technique is to read the bad sector into the disk RAM and write it back (which recalculates the checksum) to the disk. Then you can read the program in and fix it. This process is instructive in a BASIC program in that you examine it for an obvious fault such as a bad BASIC keyword or bad line number, etc. Machine code is more difficult in that it must be dissassembled (or the code in the bad sector is examined) and searched for the error.

To use the program you must know the sector where the error ocurred. Use the WEDGE DOS5.1 or equivalent or run the small Basic program:

```
10 OPEN1,8,15
20 INPUT#1,E,EM$,ET,ES
30 PRINT E,EM$,"TRACK"ET,"SECTOR"ES
```

Ware Oh Ware Oh Ware

by George Pope
CCCC, Tucson, AZ

Are you WAREy confused? It's no wonder since there are so many different WAREs running around. Here is a short glossary to help you around.

HardWARE = Most of the heavier things you can physically pick up. The computer, disk drive, monitor, and printer all fall into this category.

SoftWARE = The programs that make the computer work whether its a game, word processor, or David's Directory Designer. Generally put into the computer via disk or tape drive, it can also be contained in a cartridge but that makes it fall into:

FirmWARE = A sort of combination of the above items. The dividing line is really fuzzy according to who is defining it. Generally its a dedicated piece of material that usually contains ROM (Read Only Memory) that does a specific thing when hooked to or placed in the computer or its peripherals. Examples include Vic-Tree, various printer interfaces, and other cartridge games, and additions to the peripherals. Usually they are instantly available to the user without loading in special programs.

VaporWARE = Any of the above promised by the manufacturers or software houses that never materializes. Some examples include the 1572 dual disk drive for the C-128, the dual drive SX-64, and for a while the Mimic Apple emulator. The Mimic now actually exists and therefore made the jump that few do from vapor to hard WARE. There is always a chance that vapor will actually solidify into one of the above categories.

FantasyWARE = I'm coining this term here for descriptive purposes. Most of the above WAREs start here. These are the dreams of makers. Sometimes they are merely the idea that it tossed out to "test the waters" to see if there might be enough interest to warrant the investment in R & D (Research and Development) necessary to make the dream a reality. Those that don't make it become vaporWARE. Currently there are quite a few offerings that are in this category. The 3 1/2" Commodore drive, or the 512K RAM expansion module for the 64 and/or 128. Hopefully they will become hardWARE on or near schedule next year and not go the way of the lap computer we saw the prototype for a little over a year ago when the C-128 was proudly ehxibited here in town.

FreeWARE = Usually means anything but free. This category of software encompasses a wide range of programs launched by their authors into the channels normally occupied by public domain software. The idea is to get the programs circulated to a large number of users and trust them to make a voluntary payment to the author. Reasons for doing this will vary from not finding a software house that wants to publish it; not having sufficient funds to be able to launch it personally; possibly not of normal commercial quality. Whatever, these programs are normally a step or so higher than those programs normally in the public domain. The continued availability will depend upon the response by the using computerists. [Ed. Note: Called "SHAREWARE" in my circles.]

Certificate Maker

Review by Laura Clements

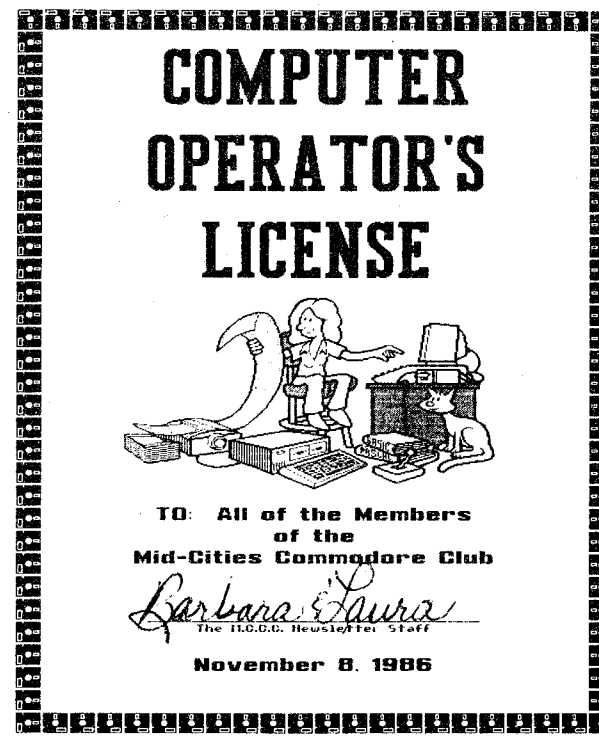
What can I tell you? Now we can make certificates for any occasion (220 templates), with many borders (24), and some fonts (5). The list of printers and interfaces will undoubtedly cover all configurations.

The program is menu driven and easy to use. The documentation is thorough. It printed beautifully the first time, which is unusual, because generally I've got at least one dip switch in the wrong place.

Certificate Maker has a special feature that enables the user to put different names on several copies of the same certificate. A seperate procedure allows the user to create lists containing names of groups of people, and then the user can choose specific names.

Each certificate comes in one of three predetermined sizes: vertical or horizontal using the whole 8 1/2" X 11" page, and a small certificate that is a half-page size.

This is a terrific program. I expected to find it a program that I would have enjoyed using when my girls were little, but the options and create-ability of Certificate Maker will appeal to all ages and all situations.



Robot Rascals

Ozark Softscape & Electronic Arts

Review by Laura Clements

The programmers of Robot Rascals wanted a game like M.U.L.E. that could be played both both the younger and older members of the family. The similarities of the two programs are apparent.

Robot Rascals is an electronic scavenger hunt for two, three, or four players. the search is for randomly assigned "artifacts". This is done by a set of cards. A second set called Luck Cards give the player a chance to improve their situation, even to the detriment of the other players. The board, which is onscreen, is a country called "Laustenfownd", which controls by computer the "global events". In the environment are trees, lakes, and hazards. The winner of the game is the first player to get home with all the artifacts in his/her possession.

Each player controls a robot of their own choosing which they move around the board (Laustenfownd) by joystick to collect the artifacts. There are three levels of difficulty: beginner, standard, and advanced.

This game will definitely appeal to anyone who likes scavenger hunts with surprises!

The Railroad Works

Review by Wes Eardley
SPUG, Springfield, IL

Do you like building model railroads? Wanted to, but just don't have the room? Well I recently bought a program that allows you to build a railroad that covers up to 12 screens. There are trees, houses, buildings, factories, mountains, etc. that can be used to landscape your layout. You can choose between a modern or antique train.

Once you have built your railroad, it's time to try it out. Running the trains can be a lot of fun. Activities include...controlling the direction and speed of your train, throwing switches on the cross tracks, and loading and unloading the cars. You may choose to run your train in the OPERATE mode (non-competitive), or in GAME mode. Game mode puts you on a time schedule to meet your goals.

The program sells for $10.00 or better, depending on where you purchase it. It is called The Railroad Works, and was released by CBS Software. It quicky became one of my favorite programs, and I think that you will find it the same.

RGBI Conversion System

by Rick Lembree
So. Maine Users Group

Right now, I am typing this to you on my C-128 using Word Writer 128, 80 column screen and in full color with a -- get this: my 1702 composite monitor! How did I do it? all I needed was a kit called the RGBI CONVERSION SYSTEM sold by DigiTek, Inc. It's available for most brands of composite monitor and only sets you back $49.95 (plus COD charges).

For the price, it's an excellent idea to get around having to pay $250+ for an RGBI monitor. However, if you are not handy with a soldering iron you may be biting off more than you can chew, despite the excellent technical support line (no, it's not an 800-number) and a very good installation manual.

The kit, which comes with the installation manual, a half-wired circuit board, wiring, and miscellaneous parts, is pretty good quality merchandise, but my circuit board was damaged (possibly in transit?) which required me to replace a potentiometer before things would run right. This caused me much pain and aggravation because I didn't immediately see the problem and I had rewired the whole thing before catching the problem with my ohm meter.

After everything was installed properly and running like it was supposed to, I had very satisfactory results. However, there is a tradeoff that unfortunately comes with the kit. You lose your chroma-luma inputs and must rewire your composite cord (if you intend to use 40 columns in color again) to the video output pin. It's up to you how much of a tradeoff it really is but for me it was worth it.

I recommend this kit highly if you either are a good tinkerer, familiar with electronics, OR you know someone who is. Otherwise, you may end up trashing a 1702. There were moments while I was working on the kit that I thought all was lost but the tech line proved very helpful and got me through it.

The kit is available for $49.95 (plus COD) from Digitek, Inc., 10415 N. Florida Ave., Suite 410, Tampa, FL 33612; or call 813/833-8023.

C128 HIRES Shapes

By John Wareing
CCCC, Tucson, AZ

Here are some little programs contributed by our president. They are fractals, converted from files in an article written to show what wonderful things can be done "only" on an IBM!

```
Hires#1
10  COLOR  0,1:COLOR  4,1:COLOR 1,8:
  GRAPHIC 1,1:WIDTH 1
20 SU=.07:RU=1-SU:II=1:C=1
30 FORJ=0TO3:II=-II:JJ=1:FORI=0TO6:
   JJ=-JJ:IF I<JORI>6-J THEN 100
40 X(1)=0:X(2)=39:X(3)=78:
   Y(1)=0:Y(3)=0:
   IFII=JJ THEN Y(2)=48:ELSE Y(2)=-48
50 FOR N=1 TO 17:X1=3+X(3)+I*39:
   Y1=175-Y(3)-J*48+II*JJ*24
60 FOR M=1 TO 3:X2=3+X(M)+I*39:Y2=175
  -Y(M)-J*48+II*JJ*24
70 DRAW 1,X1,Y1 TO X2,Y2:X1=X2:
   Y1=Y2:NJ=M-INT(M/3)*3+1
80 XD(M)=RU*X(M)+SU*X(NJ):YD(M)=
   RU*Y(M)+SU*Y(NJ):NEXT M
90 FOR P=1 TO 3:X(P)=XD(P):Y(P)=YD
   (P):NEXT P,N
100 NEXT I,J
110 GETKEYA$:IF A$="" THEN 110:ELSE
    GRAPHIC 0:END

MC#1
10 COLOR 0,1:COLOR 4,1:COLOR 1,8:COLOR
  2,7:COLOR 3,9:WIDTH 1:GRAPHIC 3,1
20 SU=.12:RU=1-SU:II=1:C=1
30 FORJ=0 TO 3:II=-II:JJ=1:forI=0 TO 6:
   JJ=-JJ:IF I<J OR I>6-J THEN 115
40 IF J<2 OR I>2 THEN C=C-INT(C/3)*3+1
50 IF J=3 THEN C=C-INT(C/3)*3+1
60 X(1)=0:X(2)=39:X(3)=78
   Y(1)=0:Y(3)=0:IFII=JJ THEN
   Y(2)=48:ELSE Y(2)=-48
70 FOR N=1 TO 9:X1=(3+X(3)+I*39)/2:
   Y1=175-Y(3)-J*48+II*JJ*24
80 FOR M=1 TO 3:X2=(3+X(M)+I*39)/2:
   Y2=175-Y(M)-J*48+II*JJ*24:
   C=C-INT(C/3)*3+1
90 DRAW C,X1,Y1 TO X2,Y2:X1=X2:Y1=Y2:
   NJ=M-INT(M/3)*3+1
100 XD(M)=RU*X(M)+SU*X(NJ):YD(M)=
    RU*Y(M)+SU*Y(NJ):NEXT M
110 FOR P=1 TO 3:X(P)=XD(P):Y(P)=YD(P):
    NEXT P,N
115 NEXT I,J
120 GETKEYA$:IF A$="" THEN 120:ELSE
    GRAPHIC 0:END
```

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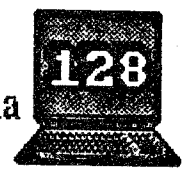
C128 File Reader

(C) 1986 by Michael LaPaglia



When I first got my C-128, I was suprised to see that Commodore had not included a 'TYPE' command in Basic 7.0. There was one in the CP/M mode, but that did not help me in 128 mode. The program that follows is a short (243 bytes) Machine Language routine that adds a 'TYPE' command to the F4 key. When run, it will install the file reader at $1700, dec 5888, and reprogram the F4 key to activate the file reader. Once in the file reader, you are prompted to 'Enter the file name (type $ for the dir or left arrow to quit)'. Once the file starts to display on your screen, the space bar will start and stop the printout. Pressing the left arrow key will abort the printout and close all files. Should you want a printout of the file, simply turn your printer on before you press the F4 key and the file will be sent to the printer instead of the screen. I find this program useful enough that I have in in my 'AUTOEXEC' batch file. This way it loads everytime I turn my computer on.

For those of you that are not familar with a 'TYPE' command, it is a simple file reader for all types of files on a disk. MS-DOS and CP/M both contain it, and it is very useful to have it your fingertips. I use it when I am going through my disks looking for a file or just browsing. This way I do not have to stop and load a word processor to read a doc. or help file. Because the filereader resides below BASIC memory, you can include this routine in your BASIC programs. Simply 'SYS5888' from within your BASIC prg to activate the file reader.

If you do not feel like typing in this program, it is included on most of the CCCC 128 library disks as 'JHF FILE READER 128'.

```
1 key4,"bank15:sys5888"+chr$(13)
2 scnclr
3 print"wait 3 seconds"
4 bank 0 :for i= 5888 to 6143
5 reada$:pokei,dec(a$):next
6 print"*************************
7 print"*  jhf file reader 128  *
8 print"* (c) 07/86 m. lapaglia *
9 print"*************************
10 print:print"press f4 to activate"
11 new
12 data20,7d,ff,0d,0e,6a,68,66
13 data20,66,49,4c,45,20,52,45
14 data41,44,45,52,0d,28,63,29
15 data20,37,2f,38,36,0d,0d,0d
16 data0d,49,4e,50,55,54,20,46
17 data49,4c,45,20,4e,41,4d,45
18 data20,20,28,24,20,46,4f,52
19 data20,64,69,72,2c,20,5f,20
20 data54,4f,20,51,55,49,54,29
21 data20,00,a2,00,86,fe,20,e4
22 dataff,c9,00,f0,f7,c9,24,f0
23 data6a,c9,5f,f0,7b,20,d2,ff
24 dataa6,fe,9d,f3,17,c9,0d,f0
25 data07,e0,0f,f0,03,e8,d0,dc
26 data86,fe,a9,08,a2,08,a0,08
27 data20,ba,ff,a5,fe,a2,f3,a0
28 data17,20,bd,ff,20,c0,ff,a9
29 data04,a2,04,a0,07,20,ba,ff
30 dataa9,00,20,bd,ff,20,c0,ff
31 dataa2,08,20,c6,ff,20,e4,ff
32 dataa6,90,d0,34,48,20,cc,ff
33 dataa2,04,20,c9,ff,68,20,d2
34 dataff,20,cc,ff,20,e4,ff,c9
35 data20,f0,2b,c9,5f,f0,19,a0
36 data00,f0,d5,ad,00,ff,85,fe
37 dataa9,0d,20,d2,ff,20,7e,a0
38 dataa5,fe,8d,00,ff,4c,00,17
39 data20,cc,ff,a9,08,20,c3,ff
40 dataa9,04,20,c3,ff,60,20,e4
41 dataff,c9,20,d0,f9,f0,a9,60
42 data00,00,00,ff,00,ff,00,ff
43 data00,ff,00,ff,00,ff,00,ff
```

Amiga Myths & Facts

by Joel Halbert
CCCC, Tucson, AZ

The introduction of a new personal computer is often accompanied by confusion, misinformation and a great deal of hype. In the case of the Amiga, this has been exacerbated by several factors:

1. The (essentially) simultaneous introduction of another 68000 machine, namely the Atari ST series.

2. The placement in magazines of certain ads and letters, which contain exaggerated or incorrect comparisons of Amiga and Atari. (To be fair, most of this material was NOT directly from Atari Corp. However, Atari hasn't exactly gone out of its way to set the record straight.)

3. The widely publicized financial troubles of Commodore, and the general recession of the computer industry during 1985-86. Commodore also hasn't done a very effective public relations job for itself or for the Amiga product.

4. The tendency of industry reporters to be skeptical of anything new and different (at first, they were skeptical of the IBM PC and of Lotus 123, and now they're skeptical of anything that's not identical to these established products).

5. The further tendency of (some) reporters to accept and paraphrase incorrect articles that they read elsewhere, rather than going out to research the facts for themselves.

The purpose of this article is to expose some of the Amiga "Myths", which seem mostly to run against the machine, and shatter them with some Amiga "Facts" (as well as a few Amiga "Opinions"). Before I start this, though, I would like to make an observation. There are many different machines on the market, with individual strengths and weaknesses. It is not possible to make a definitive statement that one machine is the "best" for everyone - though some people seem to think so. Personally, I don't care if others are convinced that they want an Atari, an IBM, or a Speak 'n Spell. I don't even mind that they help someone else make an informed decision to buy such a machine. However, I DO care if potential Amiga customers are turned away by misinformation. Why? Because I want the Amiga to do as well in the marketplace as it deserves to do - this assures the continued development of new software and hardware, and fosters competition which keeps prices as low as possible. OK, now let's get down to specifics.

MYTH: There is little useful software for the Amiga, and developers are reluctant to commit themselves to a new machine.

FACT: It is true that there are not five hundred different word processors and three

hundred different spreadsheet programs. However, there are SEVERAL word processors and text editors already available, most of which have features that would place them in the upper echelon of IBM programs. There are several spreadsheets, accounting programs, "idea processors", etc. available. Furthermore, I would argue that it is narrow-minded to judge the Amiga by how many "IBM-style" programs it runs. The irony is this: the most interesting and powerful Amiga software is often overlooked because THERE IS NO COUNTERPART on other machines. Try to find another computer that can combine your own music, text, graphics, animation, etc. in ONE low-priced software application, yet maintain data compatibility with all your other programs. Unfortunately, none of the stores in Tucson are able to stock enough Amiga software - there is way too much of it.

In terms of what WILL be available, there are far more major, high quality programs under development for the Amiga than there were for the IBM PC, the Macintosh, or the Commodore 64 in their first sales years. Rather than being concerned, as a user, about the lack of Amiga developers, I would be concerned as a developer that I'll have some tough competition. Look at any of the "Software Buyer's Guide" sections in Amiga magazines to see what's coming - it's pretty impressive.

MYTH: The Atari ST machines do the same thing the Amiga does, at a lower price.

FACT: The ST's are good and powerful machines compared to most others, BUT the Amiga still has far more capability and future potential. The Amiga has much faster graphics and superior sound due to its well-publicized graphics coprocesser, blitter and four-voice stereo sound chip. The Amiga has a sophisticated, multitasking operating system which is closer to that of a minicomputer than a PC. The Amiga is highly expandable by design - the system bus comes out the side for "kludge-less" hardware expansion, and the system software was written so that it can do new things by simply adding software modules, rather than by "patching" or rewriting sections of its code. Having said this, it is certainly true that some Atari software is just as good (or even the same) as some Amiga software. Many developers are still learning how to exploit the Amiga's capabilities, and it is not surprising to see many "adaptations" or "ports" of existing software to run under AmigaDOS. When a programmer decides to take full advantage of the Amiga (and many do), he knows that he will be unable to sell the same program to run on Atari or Macintosh. If the ST's impressive capabilities are enough for you, fine. But if you want more, better and faster, look at the Amiga.

MYTH: The Amiga is slower because its clock runs at 7.16 MHz vs. the Atari's 8.0 MHz. Furthermore, the exalted Amiga "custom graphics chips" just get in the way of the CPU by stealing bus cycles, negating any possible speed advantage.

FACT: Wrong again! This is one of the insidious falsehoods that appeared in advertisements and magazine letters. Yes, the Amiga's 68000 clock does run about 10% slower that the ST's, and for very good reason: Amiga video is designed to be compatible with NTSC (American television) scan rates, and the graphics hardware is synchronized with the video beam scan. But this is only the beginning. The truth is that the Amiga's central processor, running at full speed, uses only every other memory cycle. The custom chips use the memory bus IN BETWEEN 68000 bus cycles. So, you have the full power of the 68000 PLUS the custom chip activity. Now, there IS a mode, called the blitter "nasty" mode, in which the blitter steals cycles from the 68000. This is done for another very good reason - the blitter is far more efficient at moving memory around than the 68000 is. So even in those cases where the blitter does interrupt the 68000, the net result is a significant INCREASE in system speed over the "plain vanilla" 68000 setup in the Atari. The only case in which the Atari would be faster than the Amiga (by about 10%) is when you have a program that sits there and crunches, without ever doing any graphics manipulations or any calls to the resources of the custom chips.

MYTH: Commodore Business Machines, Inc. is teetering on the verge of bankruptcy, and is likely to leave the Amiga as an "orphaned" machine if it goes under.

FACT: Commodore has had some very tough times in the past couple of years, along with Atari (which was bought by Jack Tramiel), TI, IBM and the rest of the computer and semiconductor industry. Without being an insider, one can't know if they were ever really close to bankruptcy; they did have to renegotiate some major credit agreements with their bankers. Commodore took a loss in the first half of the year, largely due to writeoffs from plant closings and other divestments. Their "retrenchment" included a significant layoff, much like others throughout the computer/electronics industry. Their latest quarterly report showed a slim profit, which has bolstered the confidence of their major stockholders. Even if CBM were to fail, which is getting less likely all the time, the financial arrangements with Commodore-Amiga would permit the Amiga to

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For those of you that are not familar with a 'TYPE' command, it is a simple file reader for all types of files on a disk. MS-DOS and CP/M both contain it, and it is very useful to have it your fingertips. I use it when I am going through my disks looking for a file or just browsing. This way I do not have to stop and load a word processor to read a doc. or help file. Because the filereader resides below BASIC memory, you can include this routine in your BASIC programs. Simply 'SYS5888' from within your BASIC prg to activate the file reader.

If you do not feel like typing in this program, it is included on most of the CCCC 128 library disks as 'JHF FILE READER 128'.

```
1 key4,"bank15:sys5888"+chr$(13)
2 scnclr
```

lack of creative thinking. It's a good thing that the writer of Lotus 123 didn't stop just because his program wasn't compatible with VisiCalc on the Apple II. The Macintosh also was "doomed to failure" at first, but now has a strong following.

Besides that, there are many business activities which cannot be run on a spreadsheet or accounting program. The Amiga really has far more potential as a "business computer" because it will serve as a workstation for drafting, documentation, graphic arts, multimedia presentations, and just about anything else that now requires highly specialized and expensive computers. For the same reasons, it will find its way into many businesses that until now had little use for a "business" computer.

Furthermore, while the so-called "business market" is undeniably important, it is certainly not the only market. As people (especially young people) become more and more accustomed to computers, they will become fixtures in far more homes than they are in today. The Amiga holds more promise for fulfilling the dual home/business role than any other machine on the market.

Despite this bit of philosophy, Commodore recognizes the advantages of IBM compatibility. Their first attempt (Transformer emulation software) didn't work out too well, but the coming attraction will be very significant. This is the "Sidecar", an IBM PC compatible box that connects to the Amiga's expansion port. This makes the Amiga fully as compatible as any PC clone on the market, and more. It allows IBM programs to run as a task within the Amiga Workbench, thus creating a new machine which is more powerful and versatile than either the Amiga or IBM PC alone. This is further enhanced by resource sharing, meaning that the Amiga can take advantage of hard disks, coprocessors, etc. which are added to the Sidecar. The Sidecar is really a new concept, superior to any previous method of emulating one type of PC on another, and superior to having an Amiga plus an IBM sitting on your desk.

MYTH: The Amiga is really a game machine - a toy. Who wants a game machine for serious business?

FACT: This one is pretty amusing. Yes, the Amiga could be called the best game machine on the market. For the same reasons, it would also be the best educational machine, the best CAD machine, and the best, most versatile business machine. Think about it. How many Porsches and BMWs do you see in the executive parking lot at large companies? (Quite a few if you look.) An executive buys a sports car, the best car in town for "fun", and then uses it to drive to work every day! Nothing wrong with that - and nothing wrong with running a word processor on a computer that can also run the best entertainment software around.

MYTH: The Amiga newsletter has unlimited space for articles.

FACT: This article has become long enough already. I'll cut it off here. Write or call if you hear any more Amiga "Myths" which don't sound right to you. [Ed. Note: But it's a very interesting article, which ought to do a lot both to dispell misconceptions and to arouse interest in the Amiga, which I think is the most fantastic machine ever to be invented. NOTHING on the market has comparable speech possibilities!]

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CLUB INFORMATION

The MID-CITIES COMMODORE CLUB is a non-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school and in business. Appropriate and legal use of all types of software is encouraged by this club.

The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines Ltd. or Commodore Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC and C64) are registered trademarks of Commodore Inc.

Our meetings are open to all. Yearly membership dues are $20.00 and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC NEWS, the club newsletter, library copying privileges, attendance at any or all chapter and club meetings as well as participation in club-sponsored classes. Dues are paid on a calendar year basis and new members who join after March 31 of each year pay prorated dues for the months remaining.

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The MCCC NEWS accepts advertising from both members and from commercial establishments. Member rates are free for classified ads. These ads must be computer related and not of a commercial nature. A commercial ad is defined as one where you are running a business and are selling the same item or items to many people. Members submitting such ads will be charged commercial rates.

COMMERCIAL RATES are as follows:

$60.00 per full page ad, $30.00 per half page ad, $20.00 per quarter page ad and $10.00 per business card. Non-members will pay commercial rates.

The deadline for submissions to the MCCC NEWS is the third Saturday of each month. PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY CAMERA-READY AD COPY. Make all checks payable to Mid-Cities Commodore Club and mail to MCCC NEWS, P.O. 1578, Bedford, TX 76021.

Amiga Chapter News

At the November meeting there will be a demonstration of at least three **sound digitizing systems** (perhaps more.) This will afford our members an excellent opportunity to compare several competing products.

The December meeting will feature a presentation of **Entertainment Software** (That's Entertainment!). Don't miss out on the fun.

Club elections will be held during the November meeting, and chapter elections will be held during the December meeting. Vote for the fearless leader of your choice!-Rick Schulz

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NEW! Expanded Format

In the past year, the MCCC has grown both in number and scope. The club wishes to continue support of the C64 while also providing resources for the C128 and the Amiga. In order to provide information for all three machines, the MCCC NEWS has added four additional pages and reference icons to further your enjoyment of the newsletter. We hope you will enjoy these improvements in 1987.

Don't miss the...

MCCC Holiday Party

December 13 1:30pm
Brookside Convention Ctr.
(Bedford-Euless Rd. at Brookside Dr. in Hurst)

Bring snacks, computers and software to share.

December Meetings

Due to the Christmas Season and the Annual MCCC Holiday Party, there will be only two of the regularly scheduled meetings held in December.

Dec. 6 Board Meeting, 10:00 am, Western Hills Inn

Dec. 13 Holiday Party

Newsletter Deadline

Dec. 18 Amiga Chapter, 7:00 pm, Arlington Com. Center

Other chapter meetings have been cancelled for December. See you in 1987.

MCCC NEWS

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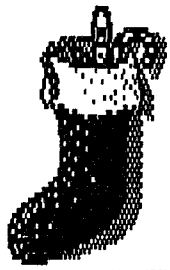

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